



First U.S. Army

First in Deed



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Members of the Civil Support Detachment (Weapons of Mass Destruction) test for simulated bio-toxins during certification training.

Photo by Karen Bradshaw



*The Secretary of
Defense
designated
Friday, May 12
as Military
Spouse Day*

First In Deed Links

To further assist and inform you, we have added links to important First U.S. Army web pages and others. Just click on the "Highlights" to be forwarded to interested topic.

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First U.S. Army conducts one of the nation's largest civil support for weapons of mass destruction and natural disaster exercises

Maj. K. Gainer and Karen Bradshaw

Fort Benning, Ga....First U.S. Army's Response Task Force-East (RTF-E) for Weapons of Mass Destruction was put to the test recently in its role as a Department of Defense coordinator in one of the nation's largest civil support exercises called Launch Relief 2000, better known as LR2K. The 6-8 March training event involved over 300 military members and 200 civilian participants ranging from exercise planners to scenario role players.

The majority of the exercise players worked from the central operations cell at Fort Benning, Ga. where the RTF-E established its operations center but related activities occurred in Alabama and Florida. The RTF-E normally deals with Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) incidents that occur east of the Mississippi River, but in this case the unit also dealt with the consequences brought on by a presidentially declared flooding emergency and the ever-persistent pressures of the news media.

In fact, exercise participants had to get through a number of scenario driven and real-world reporters throughout the event. The exercise coordinator, Mr. Jerome Loving, wanted to incorporate the most realistic and taxing environment possible. "Having the press involved in the operation from the start will force leaders to plan accordingly and not let the media stop their activities," said Loving.

In a press conference during the exercise, The RTF-E commander, Maj. Gen. Alan D. Johnson, said that the military was there to help and that the Department of Defense was not putting itself into a position to control state responders.

"We are here to support the lead federal agency and will do so to the best of our ability because we are backed by the full might of the U.S. Armed Forces," said Johnson.

The participating agencies included the FBI, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Atlanta-based national Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and various local law enforcement and emergency assistance responders. First U.S. Army action officers spent 18 months planning for this exercise with the primary goal of helping the Department of Defense (DoD) and civil authorities.

Contued on page 5

WOMEN IN PRO FOOTBALL

HHD COMMANDER

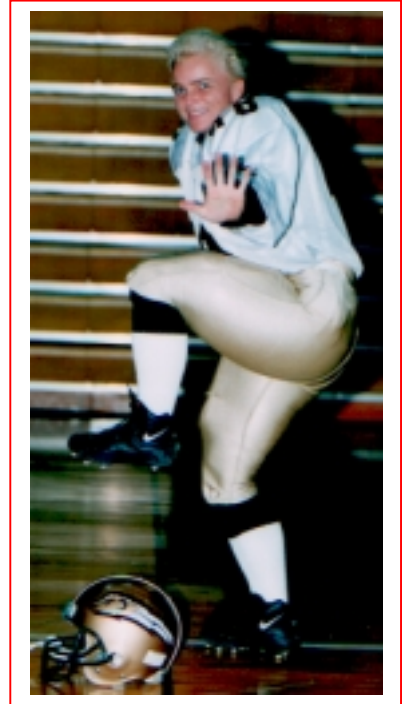
2ND BRIGADE, 85TH DIVISION (TS)

(FACT OR FICTION)

It's a FACT. Twenty years ago, Casey Chamberlain rocked the traditional boat with her desire to play football for Boscobel High School. That was before the era of Title 9 and equal opportunity for all athletes – male or female. Her request was denied. “I tried to go out for the high school team, but the Coach told me they didn’t have the right padding for girls,” Chamberlain recalls.

Chamberlain never gave up on her football dreams, and today she is the starting fullback with the Minx, one of two charter teams of the Women’s Professional Football League (WPFL). The league was featured on *CBS Sunday Morning* show and in the November issue of *ESPN Magazine*. This is the WPFL’s first year and currently there are only two teams in the league, the Minx and the Minnesota Vixens. That will change next season when 10 or 11 new teams are expected to join the league. Chamberlain’s rigorous Army training had a lot to do with her ability to make the team. She can run over opposing linebackers and was recently featured in *Women’s Fitness* magazine.

Chamberlain is a Captain in the Army Reserve, and a former Commander of HHD, 2nd Brigade, 85th Division (TS), at Fort McCoy. She relinquished command on 26 February 2000 and will pursue a career in the Operations Section, 2d Brigade, 85th Division (TS).



From the CG's Desk

First, let me thank you and your families for what you are doing for our Army and Nation. All of you make the First U.S. Army Team a winning team. On June 14, 2000 the Army celebrates its 225th birthday. I ask all of you to pause to reflect on our great history and realize that the Army's success is rooted in our flexibility and willingness to change and to meet the world as it is, without altering the core competencies that make The Army the best fighting force in the world. Your courage, dedication to duty, and selfless service to the Nation is the hallmark. You, the soldiers of the United States Army, supported by your families carry our Army into the 21st century. Another momentous occasion lies before us in June, when we as a Nation commemorate the start of the Korean War fifty years ago. This offers a wonderful opportunity for you to participate in commemorative activities in your community. Please, as you go to annual training, remember SAFETY. Simple accidents can be deadly. Be careful!

Gen. Shelton Ready to Tackle TRICARE Issues

By Staff Sgt. Kathleen T. Rhem, USA
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON—DoD has made huge strides in quality-of-life issues, but healthcare for service members and their families still needs serious work, the nation's top military officer said Jan. 31.

"To have implemented TRICARE worldwide in five years with its 8.3 million beneficiaries is quite an accomplishment," Army Gen. Henry Shelton, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said in opening remarks at the three-day 2000 TRICARE Conference here. "A tremendous amount has been achieved, but I'm sure you'll all agree with me that we still have a long way to go."

Shelton told his audience of some 400 civilian and military healthcare providers and administrators that healthcare is one of DoD's "big four" quality-of-life issues—the building blocks of a quality volunteer force. The other three are pay and compensation, retirement benefits, and housing.

He cited the 4.8 percent pay raise, pay table reform and repeal of the Redux retirement plan in the fiscal 2000 budget as examples of the defense leadership's commitment to recruit and retain a quality force. Also, Defense Secretary William Cohen in January announced a major initiative to eliminate out-of-pocket housing costs within five years.

"This year we've got to address healthcare," Shelton said. "The bottom line is that our service members and their families must be able to count on their healthcare system. Our fighting men and women on the frontlines of freedom need to know that their families are being taken care of."

He told the group that thanks to e-mail, today's deployed troops know almost immediately if there is a problem with healthcare at home. "While they are doing their job taking care of the nation's defense, they expect us to provide an effective, user-friendly healthcare system," he said.

Overall, TRICARE beneficiaries may say they're satisfied with the healthcare they receive, but many complain about the process of getting that care, Shelton said. "Every time I talk to them, one of their most frequent complaints is ... with the process it takes to finally get the care they need," he said.

"To the health system's credit, once our men and women and families receive care, few of them complain about the quality of care or the attitude of the healthcare providers," he told the conference attendees. "This is a bright spot in the system, and when it works it is the result of the hard work that you all do."

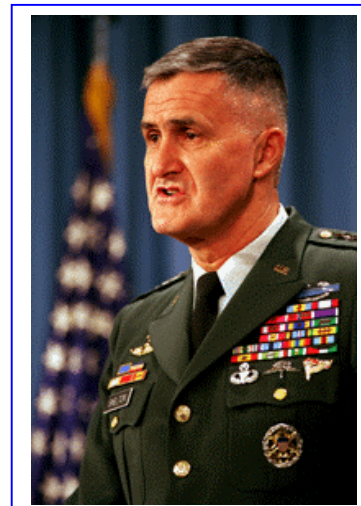
Shelton said many frustrations can be traced to poor customer relations and bad business practices. TRICARE's regional structure works against consistency in such "common-sense areas" as appointments, claims and enrollment, he noted.

"As many of you know, TRICARE requires that members re-enroll every time they change regions, something that occurs frequently as our service members and their families must pick up and move every two to three years," he said.

"This adds to their stress and frustration, and oftentimes, their workload."

Another concern is that there are differences in benefits between those stationed stateside and those stationed overseas. "These challenges require our urgent attention," Shelton said. He noted that Dr. Sue Bailey, assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, addressed the Joint Chiefs in January and laid out a plan and a schedule to fix these issues. But that's still not enough, he said.

"We ask our service members to be ready to serve any time, anywhere. They expect no less from their healthcare system," he said. "If a service member can't count on TRICARE when it's needed, then when the time comes to re-enlist, the answer might just be 'no.'" In short, TRICARE can't be just an insurance agency; it must be much more."



[Continued...click here to launch to the complete article](#)

Editor's Note: Additional information on TRICARE issues can be found at the First U.S. Army's Staff Medical Adviser's web page, click on the logo above to launch to the SMA home page.



Virginia Army National Guard Cooks surprise the field

By Maj. Tom Wilkinson, Virginia Army National Guard PAO

“BAM!” It was like watching renowned Chef Emeril Lagasse as 200 Army cooks gathered at Fort Lee recently for the Army’s 25th Culinary Arts Competition.

Four Virginia Army National Guard members walked away with a Silver medal and second place on Wednesday after competing in the event for the first time. This is also the first time any National Guard member has competed in the event.

The competition was held at Fort Lee, Va., Feb. 26 through Mar. 8 and involved 17 categories of cooking. The categories ranged from individual chefs to cooking in the field with Mobile Kitchen Trailers. The Virginia National Guard soldiers chose the latter.

Placing second on their maiden attempt amidst a sea of active units – BAM!
Look out next year!

contest,” said Sgt. 1st Class Bill Nickels, the state’s Guard food service officer. “It was one day of cooking, with 18 other active duty units, and we took second place!”

Who are these culinary artists? They come from around the state: Staff Sgt. Greg Mason and SPC Mark Saunders both from Roanoke’s 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry; Sgt. 1st Class Wade Johnson from Winchester’s 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry and Staff Sgt. Ernest Smith from Norfolk’s 1st Battalion, 111th Field Artillery.

At the awards ceremony, Maj. Gen. Hawthorne Proctor, the quartermaster general of the Army, said, “I’ve had the distinct pleasure of being the ‘Food Dude’ for the Department of Defense. This competition says a lot about you. You soldiers are part of a legacy that says ‘you can.’”

And they did. The four Virginia soldiers were assigned a Mobile Kitchen Trailer and handed a menu at noon. They had four hours to get their supplies from the distribution point and prepare a four-course meal. Their menu consisted of a chef salad, vegetable soup, schnitzel, broccoli with cream sauce, rice pilaf, corn bread, pineapple upside down cake, a lemon-lime punch, tea and coffee.

“Of the four units competing that day, they were the only team to meet the time limit,” said Col. Don Clary, the director of logistics for the Virginia Guard. “They only missed first place by a quarter of a point!”

Of the 19 teams competing in the field-cooking category, the team from Army Europe took third; the Virginia team took second and Fort Stewart, Ga., came away with first place.

“We worked as a great team, we all fit like a glove,” said Mason. “The best part was cooking and getting it all to come together.”

Napoleon once said that an Army moves on its stomach. For these professionals, they realize the great part they play in the Army team concept and Team Virginia.

“We just want our units to realize what a great job we did,” they all chimed. “Next year we’ll take first place!”

Congratulations to First U.S. Army Soldiers and NCOs of the Year

AC/Active Guard-Reserve Component NCO

SFC Vada Turner, HHC,
94th Reserve Support Cmd

AC/Active Guard-Reserve Component Soldier

SPC Jeffery Uhler, 788th Ordnance Co. (EOD),
Ft McCoy, WI

Army National Guard NCO of the Year

SSG Jennifer Komperud, 260th MI BN,
FL Army National Guard

Army National Guard Soldier of the Year

SPC Jason Wright, Co C, 1-181 IN,
MA Army National Guard

U.S. Army Reserve NCO of the Year

SSG Virna Reynoso, 1/323d Regt,
2d Bde, 108th Div (IT), 100th DIV (IT)

U.S. Army Reserve Soldier of the Year

SPC Scott Gephart, Co B,
1-320th IN Regt, 2d Bde, 80th DIV (IT)

prepare for the ongoing possibility of natural disasters and the lingering threat of terrorism. During the exercise, 44 members of the CDC and the Public Health Service tested internal response procedures.

Interacting with dozens of observer/controllers, the task force coordinated with hundreds of other players across the three-state area as the fictional scenario of days of heavy rain set the stage for flooding. First U.S. Army's Defense Coordinating Officers, who are trained to work with the Federal Emergency

Agency (FEMA) in natural disasters, actually set up headquarters in Ozark, AL, in the state emergency center in Tallahassee, FL, and in Atlanta, Ga. They immediately began their job of coordinating for the use of DoD assets required by FEMA and other federal agencies. The support was greatly needed to mitigate the suffering of the American public because the scope of this disaster scenario completely overwhelmed all civil relief efforts.

According to the Deputy Commander of the RTF-E, Col. Richard Durden, LR2K was designed to test the participants' abilities to coordinate and respond to disasters that overwhelm local and state authorities. All



photo by Karen Bradshaw

As Major James Moody, RTF Personnel Officer watches, Major Salli O'Donnell, RTF Medical Operations Officer, researches the DoD health care assets to determine what is available to meet the health care augmentation support requirements of the Defense Coordinating Officers.

levels of RTF-E leadership answered questions from the local press and ensured that the nature of the exercise was completely understood.

"This is an exercise of multiple events, so many that you'll look at it and say it will never happen like that. But with this large of an exercise, to bring together so many different agencies, we had to have such a wide ranging scenario," said Durden.

In Ozark, AL and outside of Fort Benning's Martin Army Hospital the 5th Civil Support Detachment (Weapons of Mass Destruction) from Illinois deployed on-site to test the areas for simulated anthrax attacks. Lt. Col. Alicia Tate-Nadeau, the Detachment commander, said that her unit went to both locations as though they were dealing with the real thing.

"We played this as if we knew nothing of the scenario. It has been invaluable to us in getting ready for the real thing," said Tate-Nadeau. The 5th CSD (WMD) is composed of 22 full-time Illinois National Guard soldiers and is one of 10 such teams already

activated for response duty around the country.

The exercise was a literal talent pool of trained emergency preparedness senior reserve officers and NCOs from all services on the state and regional level in First U.S. Army's area. They served as observer controllers to players in the exercise. Many other observer/controllers and players came from First U.S. Army's training support brigades including 2d Bde, 78th Div (TS), Ft Drum, NY; 3d Bde, 78th (TS), Devens, MA; 4th Bde, 78th Div (TS), Ft. Bragg, NC; 4 Bde, 85th Div (TS), Ft.Knox, KY.; 2 Bde, 87th Div (TS), Patrick A.F.B., FL; 3 Bde, 87th Div (TS), Camp Shelby, MS; 4th Bde, 87th Div (TS), Fort Stewart, GA; and 5th Bde, 87th Div (TS), Fort Jackson, SC Training together and creating new relationships was another goal of the exercise, for when an horrendous event occurs, relief must come swiftly to the afflicted.

During the after actions review, First U.S. Army commander, Lt. Gen. John M. Riggs said that the important thing is that the members of the RTF-E pay close attention to the lessons learned.

"There is no current doctrine that explains exactly how we are to provide support to civil authorities during a WMD incident. Exercises like LR2K build a template for such operations. Units like the RTF-E will be at the forefront in developing the doctrine for future WMD operations," said Riggs.

Active and Reserve Army Soldiers Join Forces to Train Carolina National Guardsmen

By Major William D. Thurmond
5th Bde, 87th Division (Training Support)



Blackout operations-- Staff Sergeant Ray Borden, the 218th Brigade's NBC NCO as well as a full-time trainer, tracks the battle from inside his blacked-out M577

FORT JACKSON, SC -- "Attention in the TOC!! Zero three-hundred Battle Brief in five minutes!"

It's the middle of the night and Capt. Perry Beissel, the on-shift battle captain in the 218th Heavy Separate Brigade Tactical Operations Center, is attempting to get everyone focused. His job is not an easy one.

In addition to the noise and confusion normal to any field headquarters engaged in battle, there's the mud to deal with. A steady rain has turned the ground to slime. Infiltrating the once-dry TOC, it oozes everywhere.

Beissel, an active duty officer in the 5th Brigade 87th Division, is normally assigned to the 3d Battalion, 307th Regiment. But until the 218th Brigade returns from their rotation at the National Training Center (NTC) this summer, he'll be wearing two hats: one as an infantry trainer and the other as a 218th Brigade battle captain.

Beissel's situation is not uncommon. In fact, the command post exercise that has him and several hundred North and South Carolina National Guard soldiers ankle-deep in mud over an April weekend is also a result of the Army's new spirit of multi-component (active, reserve and guard) cooperation.

The command post exercise was the 218th Brigade's culminating training event prior to loading-up and moving out to the

Mojave Desert. It takes dozens of behind-the-scenes evaluators, trainers, exercise controllers and data collectors to make it all work.

Supporting this exercise were soldiers from the 1st, 4th and 5th Brigades of the 87th Division (Training Support). The 1st Brigade, out of Birmingham Alabama, specializes in conducting computer training simulations for units like the 218th.

The 4th Brigade from Fort Stewart, Georgia had Army Aviation observer/controllers here to train the staff of the 449th Aviation Group. The group will accompany the 218th to NTC and provide lift and attack air support to the rotation.

The 5th Brigade, headquartered here, provides training support to all of the Army Reserve and National Guard units within South Carolina. All three brigades are composed of active and reserve soldiers.

Also working with the 218th are soldiers from the 24th Infantry Division, whose headquarters is located at Fort Riley Kansas. As the brigade's wartime higher headquarters, these officers and NCOs comprised a "Division Response Cell" (DRC) to generate orders and receive reports.

"Normally, the 1-87th Brigade has to take the DRC out-of-hide," said Col. Paul Doppel, the combat arms branch chief for the 2d Simulations Exercise Group, 1-87th Brigade. "The 24th's presence and participation here adds much realism."

Doppel also speaks highly about the way active duty and citizen soldiers joined forces to accomplish the mission. "The concept we were working towards here is one of synergy. We're bringing together three groups (active, reserve and guard); each with their own particular strengths and expertise."

"My fellow 1st Brigade folks are well experienced in collection management and providing observer/controller coverage for exercises such as this. We also know how to conduct after-action reviews that lead exercised units to 'discovery learning,'" said Doppel. "The 5th Brigade is playing a significant role by providing exercise control. Their work ensures that the opposing force and maneuver scenario are portrayed realistically."

As the exercise is winding down late Saturday evening, Doppel reflects on what was accomplished during the past few days. "It was an outstanding exercise."



First U.S. Army commander, Lt. Gen. John M. Riggs is joined by Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10821 in Cobb County, Ga., as 800 Junior ROTC cadets pass-in-review on May 2, 2000.



Col. Charles B. Ladd, First U.S. Army Senior Army Reserve Adviser stands behind Georgia Governor Roy E. Barnes as he signs into law a bill that gives all branches of the military Reserve and retired Reserve their own distinctive license plates identifying their branch of service.

Photos by Karen Bradshaw



Lt. Col. Tom MacKAY, Chief of First U.S. Army Warfighter Exercise Division points out objectives on the corps situation map. First U.S. Army Warfighters provide intensive command post level training to all designated ARNG division commanders and staffs within their area of operation.

First In Deed

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